1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

121 The immediate need is for further field studies, for which there is considerable urgency. We have, in the Ituri Forest, a people who are still living one of the earliest forms of life lived by man: hunting and gathering. The extent to which the Mbuti live this life varies from one group to another, but we cannot expect to find a pure hunting and gathering economy among them much longer. For some thousands of years 177 the Pygmy lived this life free from any outside 175 influence. In historic times various village tribes 174 invaded his forest, bringing different cultures and different economies with them. More recently the Pygmies have been in contact with European civilization, which has already driven one major road, and a number of secondary roads, right through the forest. Luckily, no effective attempt was made by the Belgians, until the last two years of their administration, to change the Mbuti way of life, and there is still ample forest to permit a hunting and gathering 177 economy. What emerges from a study of this 182 [P.147 B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.149-A]

HISTORICAL SOURCES

114 One of the most striking things about a sur-
• 175 vey of ancient and early sources concerning the
177 African Pygmies is the way it shows how, from the time these people first entered the recorded scene, in Egypt of the Sixth Dynasty, our knowledge of them decreased steadily until the late nineteenth century. To the ancient Egyptians the existence of Pygmies was a matter of fact. They are referred to as "Dancers of God" and as dwellers in the "land of trees" (Schebesta, 1933, 17; 1952, 11); they are placed on the southern borders of Sudan. A tomb of the Sixth [101] Dynasty at Beni Hassan bears a painting of representatives of conquered nations, among which is a perfectly recognizable likeness of a Pygmy, designated Aka—a name by which the northernmost Pygmies are still known today. Yet, until the turn of the present century, the modern Western world believed the Pygmy to be a myth. From Beni Hassan the scene shifts to the Pompeian parietal paintings which depict typical Pygmy scenes, with a forest camp of beehive-shaped huts, and also a scene showing Pygmies along the Nile.

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Herodotus (1866, vol. 2, sect. 32) in the fifth century B.C. reports an expedition of Nasamonians to discover the source of the Nile. They cross a vast desert and, while resting at an oasis, are captured by diminutive men, "under the middle height."

Homer (1864, vol. 3, 3–7) introduces an element of myth when he talks of fighting between the cranes and the "Pygmaean race" to the south, but Aristotle (1910, vol. 8, sect. 2) sees fit, for some reason, to assert quite categorically that Pygmies do in fact live in the land "from which flows the Nile"; he adds that they live in caves.

An isolated reference in the sixth century comes from the Emperor Justinian's ambassador who, on his way to Ethiopia, on an island off the east African coast, came across a tribe of Pygmies speaking an unknown language (unknown even to local inhabitants). That is about the last reference to Pygmies as human beings for some 10 centuries. In the fourteenth century the cartographer who drew up the Hereford Mappa Mundi still placed the Pygmies near the

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source of the Nile, although in his secondary role as theologian he depicted them as monsters, with their faces in their breasts or their heads below their shoulders. He labels them as troglodytes. 114 175. 177

Battel (1625, vol. 2, 983) refers to the existence of a nation of dwarfs and places them in the land of the Yobbi, north of the Sette River. He calls them "Dongo," and it is in this area where Du Chaillu (1867, 1890) discovered the "Obongo" Pygmies in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Other seventeenth-century reports by Portuguese explorers describe what seem to be relatively pure Pygmy races who apparently brought ivory down to the west coast traders. Unfortunately, these explorers had vivid imaginations and interspersed their descriptions with most unlikely information, such as the power of these little people to become invisible, the only explanation they could

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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find for how the Pygmies could kill elephant. In this way belief in the existence of real Pygmy races in Africa was only further discredited; so much so that an anatomist named Tyson obtained a skeleton of one of these fabulous beings and, after careful examination, wrote a treatise (Tyson, 1699) showing that it was quite clear that "Pygmies" were, in fact, not human beings but apes. He had good grounds for this assertion, because the skeleton he examined, and which survived until recently at the British Museum (Natural History) in South Kensington, England, was that of a chimpanzee. He rounds off his discourse in the following general terms: "The most diligent enquiries of late into all parts of the inhabited world could never discover any such puny diminutive race of mankind." His explanation of the "fables" was that travelers had mistaken apes for men (Windle, 1894).

From the seventeenth century to the nineteenth there seems to have been a complete silence. Then follows a succession of explorers, travelers, administrators, and anthropologists who finally established the fact that Pygmies did exist and were, indeed, human. But that, and their approximate distribution, is about all they do tell us. Well into the twentieth century we get fanciful adventurers seriously observing

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

114 apes swinging about in the treetops and de-
175 scribing them as Pygmies.
177 The material provided by these nineteenth-
century explorers is valuable, however, for an
114 understanding of contemporary writings. Some
175 of them, such as Speke (1864) and Stanley
101 (1879, 1890), made little more than passing reference to the "dwarfs," as they were usually called. Schweinfurth (1874) is generally acknowledged as being the first to establish beyond a doubt that there was indeed a race of such people in central Africa and to give us some real information about them, particularly concerning the association of the Aka (northernmost) Pygmies, as mercenary soldiers, with the Mangbetu tribe. He was also among the first to throw in some of the many "red herrings" that have distracted even the most recent anthropologists from a strictly scientific study of the people, leading them into the speculative realms of origin, connection between Pygmies and the Bushmen of South Africa, and degree of originality of Pygmy culture.

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Others, such as Casati (1891), Le Roy (1897), Burrows (1898), Johnston (1884, 1902, 1903, 1905, 1908), David (1904a, 1904b), Hutereau (1924), Powell-Cotton (1907), and Czekanowski (1922), to mention only a very few, give further details that are of interest but cover such a wide area as to make it impossible to gather any but the most superficial notion of a generalized "African Pygmy." When these sources provide us with factual observations, the facts are often not untainted with imagination. When they go beyond facts, additional "red herrings" are cast up, such as the silent trade between Pygmies and villagers, the lawlessness of Pygmy society, the Pygmies' complete lack of religion, and their ferocity and cannibalism. To add fuel to the fire, equally imaginative interpretations show them as having reciprocal and open trade relationships with the villagers, as living an ordered life according to their "natural instincts" for law and order, as following a monotheistic mystical religion, and as living a gentle and peaceful existence. According to this material, the "Pygmies" do have their own language and they do not, their way of life is totally different from that of their villager neighbors and it is a direct copy of villager life, they live in the heart of the forest and they live on the edge of the villages. These are just some of the contradictions that make it

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[p.150-C]

impossible to form any single coherent picture. 114 101 181 175.

When Schmidt wrote "Die Stellung der Pygmäen-völker in der Entwicklungsgeschichte der Menschen" in 1910, all these contradictions were his source material. Pygmies existed, but they still had tails and were flying about from treetop to treetop, or else they were crawling on their bellies like snakes to enter their diminutive houses. Quatrefages (1887) and Le Roy (1897) had, at the end of the nineteenth century, attempted to draw together what was known about Pygmies all over the world, but Schmidt's study is the first work of real importance. He confines himself mostly to the African Pygmies and Bushmen and pursues two lines of thought: first, the relationship of both to Asiatic Pygmies; and second, the place of the Pygmy, both racially and anthropologically, in the evolution of the human race. Was the Pygmy the original inhabitant of the equatorial forests of Africa, or was he a degeneration of present Bantu stock—a throwback? These "red herrings" are still being diligently pursued, while the Pygmies and their social structure have gone unstudied by any anthropologist except with reference to these problems.

101 If the Bushmen, whose relationship to the Pygmies is highly questionable, be left aside, there are three main groups of African Pygmies —the Mbuti of the Ituri Forest, the Tswa of the western Congo and western Africa, and the Twa between Lake Kivu and Lake Tan-
[141] ganyika. Of these, only the first group is truly
[144] "Pygmy," according to Schebesta (1952), being under 150 cm. in stature and relatively free from intermixture with neighboring tribes. Schebesta refers to the Twa and Tswa as "Pygmoids." From all the available evidence
[184] it seems that the Ituri Mbuti alone preserve any semblance of their original nomadic life as hunters and gatherers, although little is known yet about the Pygmies of equatorial Africa.

• 175 Our earliest sources (the Sixth-Dynasty tomb
131 at Beni Hassan, the Pompeian parietal paintings, Homer, Aristotle, and even the Mappa Mundi) all agree in placing a Pygmy population near the source of the Nile. Later sources enlarge little on this information, and the first real attempt to delimit the territory was made by Schebesta in 1929–1930.

131 The Ituri Mbuti inhabit the forested basins of the Lindi and Ituri rivers (Schebesta). The Bomokandi River forms the northern frontier. The Mbuti never move beyond the edge of the

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1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.162-A]

ORIGIN AND HISTORY

174 Here again we are in a highly speculative field with very little data to work on. The present distribution of the African Pygmies and
• 175 Pygmoids tells us little. Early sources, reports of nineteenth-century travelers (Schweinfurth, 1874), tradition, and current distribution all seem to combine to indicate that the northeast Congo has at all times been inhabited by Pygmies who spread out through the entire forest area of equatorial Africa. Both Schebesta and Putnam subscribe to this view, but others, such as Kerken (1944), state that the Pygmies and Pygmoids of the equatorial forest are *not* the ancient inhabitants of that area. This school of thought prefers to regard the Pygmies as a degeneration of the basic Negro race, a view contradicted by contemporary physical anthropologists and geneticists (Jadin, 1936; Gusinde, 1948; Schebesta, 1938).

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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172 Archeological sources tell us nothing concerning the origin or history of the African Pygmies. Putnam reports that neolithic axheads are frequently found throughout the Ituri, often revealed when a tree is split by lightning. The [821] Mbuti, however, do not appear to recognize their origin or use, and refer to them as "turds of lightning" (Patrick Putnam, 1948, 339). Haene (1949) reports the finding of round stones with holes, which might have been currency, in the Ituri Forest, and appeals for engineers and others concerned in exploitation of the forest to be made aware of the possibility of such finds. Soors (1950a, 59), commenting on this appeal, writes that he met an engineer who, in the course of excavation in the Rega Forest, had found a large flat stone bearing hieroglyphic inscriptions. Asked what had become of it, the engineer replied: "*Nous l'avons cassée en mille morceaus—nous ne tenons pas d'être dérangés dans nos travaeaux par des amateurs d'antiquités.*"

174 Recorded history is, of course, nil, so any re-
175 liable historical reconstruction is ruled out for the moment and must remain so until there is much more physiological, demographic, or archeological evidence. Even the date and direction of migrations among the various village tribes are uncertain, though a considerable amount of research has been done in this
174 direction (Moeller, 1934, 1936). We have merely traditions of origin and history, and even this material is scanty and unenlightening.

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

tional factor that increases the degree of necessity and dependence on the part of the villagers. By "today" I refer to the period of Belgian administration, for which we have historic record. During this period additional demands were made by the administration upon the villagers; notably, able-bodied men were recruited into the road gangs for building and maintaining the thousand-odd miles of road that cross the forest, linking the widely separated administrative posts; and it was also demanded of the villagers that they produce certain specific crops in excess, and cultivate other new crops, particularly cotton, in addition. The food surplus was used to feed immigrant laborers, the cotton to produce some revenue in an otherwise highly unprofitable region.

These demands thus increased the amount of plantation work that had to be undertaken by each village, and at the same time reduced the labor force available. Penalties for failure were severe, and the villagers naturally turned to the Mbuti for help. Equally naturally, the Mbuti declined to help, except when the nature of the work suited their convenience and the rewards were adequate, and a long struggle began that continued right up to the time that independence somewhat altered the situation.

From the villagers' point of view, their relationship with the Mbuti, which had begun to prove rather tiresome and unprofitable, quickly became a matter of acute anxiety. Instead of regarding the Mbuti merely as parasites, which is effectively what they were, the villagers began to regard them as indispensable to the new village economy. From the Mbuti point of view, however, the situation had not changed. The forest was still there as a sanctuary to which they could retire with impunity at, literally, a moment's notice, and the village was still a place where they could relax, enjoy luxury foods, wine and tobacco, in return for a minimum amount of service. Being a practical people, however, they responded, to a token extent, to the new demands for service, in the form of plantation labor. But it was not to their taste, and it proved highly detrimental to their health. The villagers in many cases realized this and compromised by using the Mbuti mainly to maintain guard over the plantations, so they would not be affected by the unaccustomed sunlight or exercise, and only in emergencies asked them to actually work in the fields.

Such emergencies, however, became more and more frequent as administrative demands upon the villagers were increased. The cotton crop became the major issue, and the time of the cotton harvest was

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

the one time when, above all others, the villagers needed the help of the Mbuti. And that was precisely the time when the Mbuti were least available, for this work[1] was least to their taste, and beyond a certain point even the Mbuti cannot be bribed.

THE NEED FOR CONTROL

In 1957, and again in 1958, Chief Kachui of the Ndaka tribe found himself in difficulty over his cotton harvest. Of all the tribal chiefs in the Ituri, Kachui was one of the most powerful and one of the most influential. He had the advantage of a government-supported police force at his disposal, but on both occasions when I was at Bafwakoa at the time of cotton harvest he was without his usual retinue of Mbuti parasites. He had his sons deployed nearly to the Epulu to the east, and halfway to Wamba to the north, in an effort to learn the whereabouts of "his" Mbuti, but to no avail. He even used me in the hope that I would be able to discover at least one hunting camp, and I was led to where a few Mbuti maintained a plantation camp, living in the shade of the forest but acting as guards against raids on the plantation by monkeys, baboon and elephant, on the strict understanding that they were not used for work in the cotton fields. Although I was known there, and would normally have been taken straight to the hunting camp, all knowledge of the whereabouts of their fellows was denied. It may indeed have been that the band had broken up and gone in different directions to join neighboring bands that were less pressed, or it may simply have gone far off into the depths of the forest where it could never be found. None of Chief Kachui's threats or exhortations was of the least avail.

At the same time, Chief Kayumba of the Mbo, just across the Ituri River, was having the same trouble, and I saw some seven recently deserted village camps with not a single Mbuti to be found. Kayumba did not conceal the fact that he had constant difficulty of this kind, never being able to rely on the Mbuti to be on hand when he wanted them, and at other times being surrounded and consumed by them. Hamadi, one of the two major Bira chiefs, and probably the most unscrupulous, generally maintained a retinue of Mbuti in village camps, but as far as I could assess it was a floating population that seldom worked on the plantations. Chief Lupao of the Lesé at Nduye complained of being without Mbuti when he needed them, and this was true on the one occasion when I was at Nduye at the

[1] [i.e., harvesting cotton -- Analyst]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

1

The World of the Forest

IN THE NORTHEAST CORNER of the Belgian Congo, almost exactly in the middle of the map of Africa, . . . lies the Ituri Forest, a vast expanse of dense, damp and inhospitable-looking darkness. Here is *the heart of Stanley's Dark Continent, the country he loved* and hated, the scene of his ill-fated expedition to relieve Emin Pasha, an expedition costing hundreds of lives and imposing almost unbearable hardships on the survivors, who trekked across the great forest not once, but three times, losing more lives each time through fighting, sickness and desertion.

Anyone who has stood in the silent emptiness of a tropical rain

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

THE WORLD OF THE FOREST

The earliest recorded reference to them is not Homer's famous 175 •
lines about the battle between the Pygmies and the cranes, as one might think, but a record of an expedition sent from Egypt in the Fourth Dynasty, some twenty-five hundred years before the Christian era, to discover the source of the Nile. In the tomb of the Pharaoh Nefrikare is preserved the report of his commander, Herkouf, who entered a great forest to the west of the Mountains of the Moon and discovered there a people of the trees, a tiny people who sing and dance to their god, a dance such as had never been seen before. Nefrikare sent a reply ordering Herkouf to bring one of these Dancers of God back with him, giving explicit instructions as to how he should be treated and cared for so that no harm would come to him. Unfortunately that is where the story ends, though later records show that the Egyptians had become relatively familiar with the Pygmies, who were evidently living, all those thousands of years back, just where they are living today, and leading much the same kind of life, characterized, as it still is, by dancing and singing to their god.

When Homer refers to the Pygmies, in describing a battle between Greek and Trojan forces in the *Iliad*, he may well be relying on information from Egyptian sources, but the element of myth is already creeping in.

> *When by their sev'ral chiefs the troops were rang'd,*
> *With noise and clamour, as a flight of birds,*
> *The men of Troy advanc'd; as when the cranes,*
> *Flying the wintry storms, send forth on high*
> *Their dissonant clamours, while o'er th'ocean stream*
> *They steer their course, and on their pinions bear*
> *Battle and death to the Pygmaean race.*•

• Homer, *Iliad* (tr. Derby), iii, 1-7.

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• 175 By Aristotle's time the Western world was evidently still more inclined to treat the Pygmies as legend, because Aristotle himself has to state categorically that their existence is no fable, as some men believe, but the truth, and that they live in the land "from which flows the Nile." •

Mosaics in Pompeii show that, whether the Pygmies were believed to be fable or not, the makers of the mosaics in fact knew just how they lived, even the kinds of huts they built in the forest. But from then until the turn of the present century, our knowledge of the Pygmies decreased to the point where they were thought of as mythical creatures, semi-human, flying about in tree tops, dangling by their tails, and with the power of making themselves invisible. The cartographer who drew the thirteenth-century Mappa Mundi, preserved in Hereford Cathedral, England, located the Pygmies accurately enough, but his representations show them as subhuman monsters.

Evidently there was still some question as to their reality up to the seventeenth century, because the English anatomist Edward Tyson felt obliged to publish a treatise on "The Anatomy of a Pygmie compared with that of a Monkey, an Ape, and a Man." He had obtained from Africa the necessary skeletons, on which he based his conclusion that the so-called "pygmie" was, quite definitely, not human. The "pygmie" skeleton was preserved until recently in a London museum, and it was easy to see how Tyson arrived at so firm a conclusion. The skeleton was that of a chimpanzee.

Portuguese explorers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were responsible for many of the more extravagant accounts. It may well be that they actually did see Pygmies near the west coast of Africa, or they may have seen chimpanzees and mistaken them for Pygmies. But it is curious that they should have thought of the Pygmies as being able to make themselves invisible, and also as having the power, small as they were, to kill elephants.

[113] • Aristotle, *Historia Animalium* (tr. D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson), vii, 2.

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Mbuti

ing the power, small as they were, to kill elephants. The Pygmies today still kill elephants single-handed, armed only with a short-handled spear. And they blend so well with the forest foliage that you can pass right by without seeing them. As for their having tails, it is easy enough to see how this story came into being, if the Pygmies seen by the Portuguese dressed as they do today, as is more than likely. The loincloth they wear is made of the bark of a tree, softened and hammered out until it is a long slender cloth, tucked between the legs and over a belt, front and back. The women particularly like to have a long piece of cloth so that it hangs down behind, almost to the ground. They say it looks well when dancing.

Some of the accounts of nineteenth-century travelers in the Congo are no less fanciful, and it was George Schweinfurth who first made known to the world, in his book *The Heart of Africa*, that Pygmies not only existed but were human. He was following in the path of the Italian explorer Miani, who a few years earlier had reached the Ituri but had died before he could return. One of the most curious of little-known stories about the Pygmies is that Miani actually sent two of them back to Italy, to the Geographic Association, which had sponsored his trip. The president of the association, Count Miniscalchi of Verona, took the two boys and educated them. Contemporary newspaper reports describe them as strolling the boulevards, arm in arm with their Italian friends, chatting in Italian. One of them even learned to play the piano. From the present Count Miniscalchi I learned that both Pygmies eventually returned to Africa, where one died and the other became a saddler in the Ethiopian army. He last heard from the latter, who must then have been an old man, just before the outbreak of World War II.

Stanley describes his meetings with the Pygmies in the Ituri, but without telling us much about them, and indeed little was known beyond the actual fact of their existence until a White Father, the

3: Turnbull E-6 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Reverend Paul Schebesta, set out from Vienna in the nineteen-twenties to study them.

Schebesta's first trip was an over-all survey of the forest area, in which he established the fact that this was a stronghold of the pure Pygmy, as opposed to the "Pygmoid" in other parts of the equatorial belt, where there has been intermarriage with Negro tribes. In subsequent trips Schebesta gathered material which showed that these Ituri Pygmies—whose term for themselves, BaMbuti, he adopts—are in fact racially distinct from the Negro peoples, Bantu and Sudanic, who live around them. This fact has been confirmed by later genetic studies, up to the present. Though we cannot be sure, it seems reasonable to assume that the BaMbuti were the original inhabitants of the great tropical rain forest stretching from the west coast right across to the open savanna country of the east, on the far side of the chain of lakes that divides the Congo from East Africa.

But when I read Schebesta's account of the Pygmies it just did not ring true when compared with my own experiences on my first trip to the Ituri. For instance, in one of his first books he says that the Pygmies are not great musicians, but that they sing only the simplest melodies and beat on drums and dance wild erotic dances. Even much later, after he had come to know the Pygmies better and had spent several years in the region, when he wrote his major work, running to several volumes, he devoted only a few pages to music, attributing little importance to it and dismissing it as simple and undeveloped. This could not have been *further from the truth.*

In several other ways I felt that all was not well with Schebesta's account, particularly with his description of the relationship between Pygmies and Negroes. He gave the impression that the Pygmies were dependent on the Negroes both for food and for metal products and that there was an unbreakable hereditary relationship by which a Pygmy and all his progeny were handed down in a Negro family, from father to son, and bound to it in a form of serfdom, not only

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

commercial village that was set up on the roadside, by the government, immediately after Pat's death. The main focus of the village was not, as in so many villages, in either special plantations or road work, but in the Station de Chasse. This, with its collection of live forest animals, became an attraction for wealthy tourists with time and money enough to make the trip from Stanleyville or Beni; hence the optimistic Belgian who built the motel directly opposite. A little farther up the road, away from the river, were the houses of several hundred workers. This village stretched right up to the entrance of Camp Putnam, and beyond was the Hotel de Bière and a line of a half-dozen or so stores. The majority of these villagers, as in Camp Putnam, were from distant districts and from many different tribes. But here they had nobody to hold them together, as Putnam had his workers; their disputes were settled arbitrarily, according to Belgian notions of right and wrong. It was a village filled with jealousies, deep-seated grievances and smoldering hatred.

A few kilometers to each side of the Epulu River were two traditional villages. To the west was Dar es Salaam. The name was brought from the coast by the slave-traders, and its inhabitants were all descendants of the almost universally disliked BaNgwana, who had sold their souls to the traders and helped them in the capture of slaves and the theft of ivory. The headman of Dar es Salaam was a friendly rogue, Musafili. About two kilometers away from Dar es Salaam was the camp of Musafili's Pygmies. Like every other Negro he referred to "his" Pygmies as though they were chattels. Although Dar es Salaam always offered the warmest hospitality, I never felt at ease there. The heritage of a bloody and treacherous past was only barely dormant, and the BaNgwana are suspected today, as they always have been, of practicing the most dreaded forms of witchcraft and sorcery.

A little farther to the other side of the Epulu was a very different village, and one much more typical of the traditional settlement in

3t Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

either a pith helmet decorated with gennet skin, or else a long-haired wig of monkey fur. In his hand he carried a metal walking stick that had once been the handle and stem of an umbrella. Sometimes he wore the gennet skin around his waist, or tucked into his belt, or hung from his neck. It was the symbol of his ritual authority, and it contained the charms from which he derived his power. Generally Sabani was a kindly and gentle man, wise and good. But his loyalties were narrow, confined to his own kin and a few friends. Beyond that circle he was a man to be feared rather than trusted.

Eboyo also had its Pygmy village, not far from the main village, but Sabani preferred to keep his Pygmies in the forest where the administration could not see what they were doing. Generally they were tending illicit plantations, of hemp among other things. Sabani also had his own still, where he used to have a powerful spirit made from manioc. He was frequently drunk but never incapable. At all times he was an imposing and commanding figure. In his village there were some thirty families, including Kapamba's. Camp Putnam and Dar es Salaam were about half that size.

The attitude of all these villagers to the forest was the same. They made their villages as open as possible, and they built their houses without any windows. They tried to ignore the world around them, because for them the forest was hostile, something to be feared and fought. Even after cutting it down there was the constant labor required to keep it from growing back. It was filled with evil spirits that cursed the soil so that although it would bear gigantic mahogany trees it would produce only the most meager fruits for the villagers.

The tribes of this area had once been plains dwellers, with herds of cattle, living in the friendly open spaces of East Africa. When they were driven into the forest by more powerful tribes, they brought as much of their plains culture with them as they could. But their cattle died off, and they had to live by cultivation alone. They